

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-3 (Canceled)

4. (Previously Presented) The tread according to Claim 11 wherein the at least one orifice extends as far as a depth at least equal to half the difference between a depth P of the grooves and the depth H.

Claims 5-9 (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) A tire tread comprising a tread pattern formed by a plurality of motifs in relief which are defined by grooves oriented respectively in the transverse direction and in the longitudinal direction of the tread, each of these motifs comprising a contact face and lateral faces, a plurality of these motifs in relief being interconnected two by two by at least two rubber connecting elements molded in a respective ones of the grooves during the molding of the tread, these connecting elements defining, with the opposing walls of the motifs in relief to which they are connected, a cavity which closes in contact with the roadway to trap and compress a volume of air, at least one of the rubber connecting elements comprising at least one orifice passing through the whole of said at least one rubber connecting element to cause the volume of said cavity to communicate with a groove, wherein the at least

one orifice has an elongated form in a direction substantially perpendicular to the running surface of the tread, and wherein the form of the cross section of the at least one orifice is selected the at least one orifice is arranged as close as possible to one of the opposing faces of said motifs so as to be practically insensitive to the compression of the rubber resulting from the contact with the roadway and thus prevent its closure.

11. (Previously Presented) The tire tread according to claim 10 wherein the connecting elements extend from a depth H beneath the running surface of the tread, when new, towards the bottom of the groove, wherein the cavity is formed once the wear of the tread reaches a level of wear equal to H.

12. (Currently Amended) The tire tread according to claim ~~40~~ 4 wherein the connecting elements extend from the running surface of the tread.

Claims 13-16 (Canceled)

17. (New) A tire tread comprising a tread pattern formed by a plurality of motifs in relief which are defined by grooves oriented respectively in the transverse direction and in the longitudinal direction of the tread, each of these motifs comprising a contact face and lateral faces, a plurality of these motifs in relief being interconnected two by two by at least two rubber connecting elements molded in a respective ones of the grooves during the molding of the tread, these connecting elements defining, with the opposing walls of the motifs in relief to which they are

connected, a cavity which closes in contact with the roadway to trap and compress a volume of air, at least one of the rubber connecting elements comprising at least one orifice passing through the whole of said at least one rubber connecting element to cause the volume of said cavity to communicate with a groove, wherein the at least one orifice is formed between the bottom of a groove and the respective connecting element in said groove, the geometry of the lower face of said connecting element comprising humps for preventing complete closure of said at least one orifice on passing into the contact so as to be practically insensitive to the compression of the rubber resulting from the contact with the roadway and thus prevent its closure.